GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3037
ANSWERED ON:23.08.2006
LACK OF NUTRITIONAL ELEMENTS IN FOOD .
Siddeswara Shri Gowdar Mallikarjunappa

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether more than 70 per cent of poor children, women and girls have been found anaemic due to lack of nutritional elements in food in rural areas;

(b) if so, whether any survey has been conducted by the Government in this regard;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) to (c) According to National Family Health Survey (NFHS-II, 1998-99), 53.9% rural women and 56.0% adolescent (15-19 years) girls were found to have anemia. Among the children age group 6 to 35 months the prevalence of anemia was 74.3%.

(d) Government of India has launched the National Rural Health Mission in order to improve the availability and access to health care in rural areas. The interventions include RCH II programme wherein iron and folic acid tablets are provided to all pregnant and lactating women and children up to 3 years.

Several measures have been taken by the Government to improve the nutritional status of the people including anemia. The important measures are at Annexure.

Annexure

Measures to improve the Nutritional status including anemia of the people

Improving agricultural and horticulture produce

Improving the purchasing power of the people through various income generating schemes

Availability of essential food items at subsidized cost through Public Distribution System

Nutrition Education to increase the awareness and bring about desired changes in the dietary practices including the promotion of breast feeding and dietary diversification

A National Nutrition policy has been adopted in 1993 and a National Plan of Action for Nutrition (1995) is being implemented through various Departments of Government. The National Nutrition Mission has been set up.

Supplementary Feeding programmes

(i) Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS)

(ii) National Programme of Nutritional support to Primary Education (Mid-day Meal programme)

Programmes for prevention of Specific Micronutrient Deficiency disorders

(i) Anemia Control programme - Under the Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Programme implemented throughout the country, pregnant and lactating women and children (1-5 yrs) are provided with iron and folic acid tablets for prophylaxis and treatment of anemia.

(ii) Prophylaxis Programme to prevent Nutritional Blindness due to Vitamin A deficiency. This is also under the RCH programme

(iii) National Iodine Deficiency Disease Control Programme (NIDDCP)

(iv) Pilot programme for control of micronutrient Deficiencies